

## Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY OSLO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1566

C O N F I D E N T I A L OSLO 1968

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, NO, OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJ: SECVISIT: BRIEFING PAPER FOR SECRETARY'S VISIT: ILO

### 1. THE ISSUE

THE US HAS NOTIFIED THE ILO OF ITS INTENT TO WITHDRAW  
FROM THE ORGANIZATION UNLESS IT IS REFORMED.

2. AMBASSADOR SIBLERMAN VISITED NORWAY IN FEBRUARY  
AS A FOLLOWUP TO YOUR NOVEMBER LETTER TO REEMPHASIZE THE  
US POSITION AND FOCUS HIGH-LEVEL POLITICAL ATTENTION  
ON THIS QUESTION. HE SAW FOREIGN MINISTER FRYDENLUND  
AND LABOR MINISTER RYSTE.

3. THE FIRST MAJOR TEST OF OUR POSITION COMES WHEN  
THE GOVERNING BODY CHAIRMAN AND PRESIDENTS OF THE ANNUAL  
AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCES ARE ELECTED THIS  
SPRING AND THE MARITIME COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN IS NAMED  
THIS FALL. IT IS EUROPE'S TURN TO PRESIDE OVER BOTH  
THE GOVERNING BODY AND THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE, AND  
ELECTION OF A COMMUNIST TO EITHER WOULD ERODE TRIPARTI-  
TISM. NORWAY IS A KEY COUNTRY BECAUSE IT HAS WORKER AND GOVERNMENT  
REPRESENTATIVES ON THE ILO GOVERNING BODY.

### 4. THE NORWEGIAN POSITION

NORWAY'S LABOR GOVERNMENT, TRADE UNION FEDERATION  
(LO) AND EMPLOYER ASSOCIATION (NAF) GENERALLY  
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AGREE WITH US CRITICISM OF THE ILO AND ON

THE NEED FOR REMEDIAL ACTION, ESPECIALLY ON THE QUESTIONS OF POLITICIZATION AND DUE PROCESS. THEY WOULD NORMALLY BE INCLINED TO COMPROMISE ON STRUCTURAL CHANGE AND THE ELECTION OF AN OCCASIONAL COMMUNIST OFFICIAL TO OFFICE. HOWEVER, THEY VALUE THE ILO VERY HIGHLY. THEY WANT TO KEEP US IN THE ILO AND ARE READY TO WORK WITH US TO IMPROVE THE ORGANIZATION, AND MAY THEREFORE TAKE A HARDER LINE THAN BEFORE ON MOST ISSUES. BUT THE NORWEGIANS DO NOT FEEL AS STRONGLY AS WE DO ABOUT THE NEED FOR CHANGE IN THE ILO. THEY ARE LIKELY TO BE RELUCTANT TO MAKE THE HARD CHOICES WHICH COULD BE REQUIRED ESPECIALLY WHERE THESE MAY INVOLVE CONFRONTATION WITH THE EAST OR THIRD WORLD.

#### THE US POSITION

WE BELIEVE STRONGLY IN ILO PRICIPLES, BUT NO ILO WOULD BE BETTER THAN ONE NO LONGER TRIPARTITE AND UNABLE TO PURSUE ILO GOALS. WE HOPE US WITHDRAWAL WILL BE UNNECESSARY, AND WE WANT OUR ALLIES TO WORK WITH US TO SOP EROSION OF TRIPARTITISM AND CORRECT ILO EXCESSES. BUT IF OUR FRIENDS PREFER COMPROMISE, WE WILL LEAVE. ELECTION OF A CUMMUNIST TO PRESIDE OVER THE GOVERNING BODY OR ANNUAL CONFERENCE THIS JUNE WOULD ENSURE OUR WITHDRAWAL.

#### 6. YOUR TALKING POINTS

-- WE UNDERSTAND AND SHARE NORWAY'S INTEREST IN AVOIDING UNNECESSARY CONFRONTATION WITH THE EAST IN OTHER UNFORA. BUT THE ILO IS DEDICATED TO THE DEFENSE OF WORKERS AND FREE TRADE UNION RIGHTS, AND IT CAN ONLY DO THIS AS A TRIPARTITE ORGANIZATION WITH A DECISIVE VOICE FOR THE FREE AND INDEPENDENT TRADE UNIONS OF THE WORLD. IF UNIVERSALITY REPLACES TRIPATISM AND AUTONOMOUS WORKER AND EMPLOYEE GROUPS FALL UNDER DOMINATION BY GOVERNMENTS, THE ILO WILL LOSE ITS REASON FOR BEING AND BECOME A LITTLE UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THUS FAILING ITS PURPOSE.

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-- WE UNDERSTAND NORWAY'S DESIRE TO IDENTIFY WITH THIRD WORLD ASPIRATIONS. BUT WORKERS' INTERESTS AND TRADE UNION FREEDOMS ARE OFTEN ECLIPSED IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY IMMEDIATE POLITICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL EXIGENCIES. ONLY BY DEFENDING TRIPARTITISM AND AND RETURNING TO PROPER ILO PROCEDURES CAN WE DEFEND THE REAL LONG-TERM INTERESTS OF THE THIRD WORLD PEOPLES.

--WE SHARE NORWEGIAN ENTHUSIASM FOR THE RENEWAL  
OF DIALOGUE AND FRIENDLY TIES BETWEEN THE NORWEGIAN  
TRADE UNION FEDERATION (LO) AND THE AFL-CIO. AMERICAN  
LABOR HELPED FOUND THE ILO AND WORKS ZEALOUSLY TO  
ADVANCE ITS PURPOSES. THE AFL-CIO NOW FEELS STRONGLY  
THAT THE ILO MUST EITHER REDEDICATE ITSELF TO ITS  
ORIGINAL AIMS OR THE US MUST LEAVE. WE KNOW NORWEGIAN  
LABOR OFFICIALS WANT THE AFL-CIO IN THE ILO, AND WE  
HOPE NORWEGIAN-AMERICAN COOPERATION, WITH OUR OTHER  
ALLIES, WILL BE EFFECTIVE IN IMPROVING THE ILO SO  
WE CAN STAY AND TAKE ACTIVE PART IN THE ILO.  
BREMER

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